

City of Quincy, Massachusetts



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Annual Report
of the
Planning Board
For the Year Ending December 31
1915

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FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PLANNING BOARD
OF THE CITY OF QUINCY

*To His Honor the Mayor and Members of
the City Council.*

Gentlemen:—

The Planning Board respectfully presents herewith its first annual report for the year ending December 31st, 1915.

The Planning Board was appointed on January 18th, 1915, in accordance with the provision of Chapter 494 of the Acts of the Legislature for the year 1913, which act provides in part as follows:

SECTION 1. "Every City of the Commonwealth and every town having a population of more than ten thousand at the last preceding national or state census, is hereby authorized and directed to create a board to be known as the planning board whose duty it shall be to make careful studies of the resources, possibilities and needs of the city or town, particularly with respect to conditions which may be injurious to the public health, or otherwise injurious in and about rented dwellings, and to make plans for the development of the municipality with special reference to the proper housing of its people.

SEC. 4. Provides that "The city council or other governing body in cities is authorized to make suitable ordinances, and towns are authorized to make suitable by-laws for carrying out the purposes of this Act, and they may appropriate money therefor.

The City Council on March 15, 1915, passed "An ordinance relative to the creation of a Planning Board for the City of Quincy"—which ordinance was approved by His Honor the Mayor on March 17, 1915 and provides that the Planning Board shall consist of five members who shall hold office as follows: One for a term of one year, one for a term of two years, one for a term of three years, one for a term of four years and one for a term of five years from the first Monday in February, 1915, and beginning with the year 1916 the Mayor shall in the month of January appoint, subject to confirmation by the City Council, one member of said board who shall hold office for five years from the first Monday in February following. An appropriation of \$250.00 was included in the annual budget to meet the expenses of the board.

The Planning Board organized on February 6, 1915 with Mr. Charles W. Bailey, Chairman, and City Engineer Ezekiel C. Sargent, Clerk, and have held 20 meetings during the year. Through the courtesy of his Honor the Mayor, the meetings have been held in the Mayor's office at City Hall.

The subject of City Planning, while not new to many persons who have made a study of the development of European cities, is certainly new in its application to New England communities where villages have grown to towns, and towns to cities without any particular regard for their future needs or requirements, and where large sums of money are continually expended to correct conditions which might have been remedied a few years before at small expense, or could not have existed at all if development had been guided along the lines of a comprehensive plan.

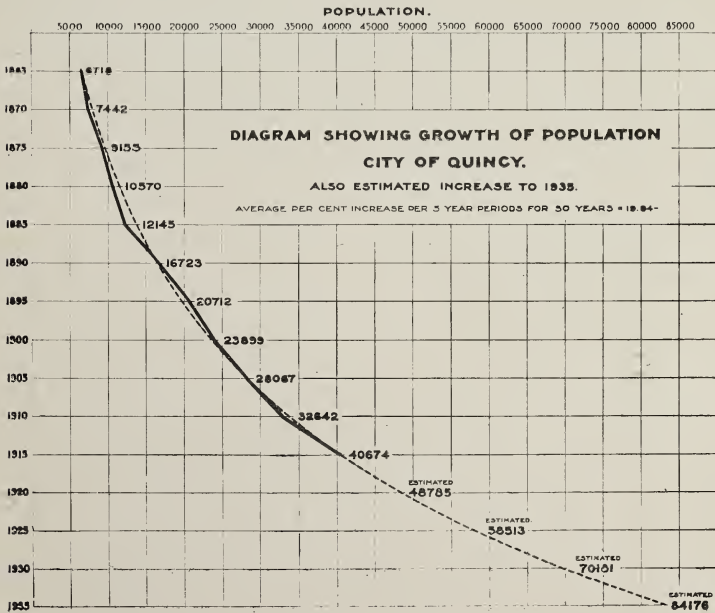
The Massachusetts planning board act was passed for the express purpose of creating a board in each community to carefully study these conditions, that improvements might be made consistent with developments, that the community's resources shall be conserved.

The powers of Planning Boards are purely advisory and the results of their investigations can only be of value through the adoption of their recommendations by the governing body.

The Quincy Planning Board has devoted much of its time in investigating existing conditions in our city, and in the collection of data, and while the board has not, as yet, undertaken the preparation of a city plan; they have, however, considered many problems which appear to be of importance, and in need of immediate attention.

Population

The board has prepared a chart showing the estimated future population of the city as based upon the records of population for the past fifty years. The estimates, we believe are conservative, but indicate approximately the probable increase for the next twenty years.



Highways

One of the most essential requirements of any city is a proper arrangement of its street system, with principal highways of sufficient width to provide for the continually increasing traffic of a growing community.

The City of Quincy is so situated that the greater part of the traffic of the south shore towns must pass through its centre in its course to and from the City of Boston.

Washington Street, Adams Street, Hancock Street, Quincy Avenue, School Street, Franklin Street and Independence Avenue are highways which at present accommodate this travel passing through Quincy Centre; while Willard Street in West Quincy bears the heavy through traffic in the westerly portion of the City.

The City has, during the past few years, widened that portion of Hancock Street from Adams Street to Washington Street to a width of 80 feet, and from Granite Street to School Street to a width of 65 feet, so that this highway through its entire length is not less than 64 feet in width.

Washington Street from City Square to Chubbuck Street, a distance of about one and one half miles is at present but 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet in width, while from Chubbuck Street to the Weymouth Fore River Bridge it is 66 feet in width. To widen this street at the present time to uniform width of 66 feet, would necessitate the immediate expenditure of a large amount of money, which the city in its present financial condition can ill afford. Yet it is evident to all familiar with the present conditions that this street must be widened in the future. The Planning Board, therefore, recommends that a building line be established on this street, in accordance with the plans herewith submitted, that the line for future widening may be defined and the city saved the expense of removing buildings which may be erected during the next few years.

This method of procedure, as recommended by the

Planning Board, has already been adopted by the present city government on School Street between Hancock Street and Franklin Street, where building lines have been established under the authority of Section 103 of Chapter 48 of the Revised Laws, which statute makes it possible for the city to establish a building line and to provide that existing buildings may remain, thereby eliminating a large part of the expense for immediate damage.

The Planning Board believes that similar action should be taken on other streets in the city: Adams Street from Hancock Street to Newport Avenue is entirely too narrow for present requirements, and building lines could be established on this portion of the street without disturbing any of the existing buildings, thereby insuring the construction of a 60 foot street in the future at a minimum cost.

Franklin Street between School Street and Independence Avenue should be protected in the same manner, by establishing building lines on this portion of the street at least 60 feet apart. East and West Squantum Streets for a considerable portion of the distance between Farrington Street and Atlantic Street is but 33 feet in width. This street is one of the oldest in the city, and is the only connecting highway between Milton and the northerly portion of the city. The Planning Board is of the opinion that this street should be at least 50 feet in width and that a building line should be established on this portion of the street, and respectfully submits herewith for your consideration, a tentative plan for this work.

Dead End Streets

There are in Quincy, as in many other cities where land development has been unrestricted, many dead end streets, and while it is to be hoped that the Board of Survey will discourage this practice in the future, the Planning Board is of the opinion that many of those now existing could be

extended without the removal of buildings, and should receive the immediate attention of the City Council.

The extension of Vassall Street to Oxenbridge Road, Norfolk Downs, is one which is now before the city council, and in the opinion of the Planning Board should be undertaken at once.

Quincy City Square

City Square, by reason of its location at the intersection of two of the principal through highways of the city, and its proximity to the railroad station has become the terminal and transfer point for the street railway lines radiating to the various sections of the city and the surrounding towns.

The amount of traffic and automobile travel through this square, particularly on Sundays and holidays, under the present arrangement results in serious congestion. The Planning Board is of the opinion that these conditions will never be materially improved until the square ceases to be used as a car barn and cars allowed to stand in the public streets. The Board believes that action should be taken by the city government to relieve, if possible, this congestion and to provide proper facilities and better accommodation for the public, and therefore present the following recommendations:—

1. That the fountain in City Square be removed, as its location is such that it prevents a proper re-arrangement of the street car lines.
2. That the street railway tracks on Hancock Street between Temple Street and Saville Avenue be re-located in the centre of the street, to allow traffic to pass through the square on either side of the railway tracks, which is now impractical as the tracks are at present located.
3. That efforts be made to induce the Bay State Street Railway Company to run their cars which connect with the Elevated through the entire length of Hancock Street to

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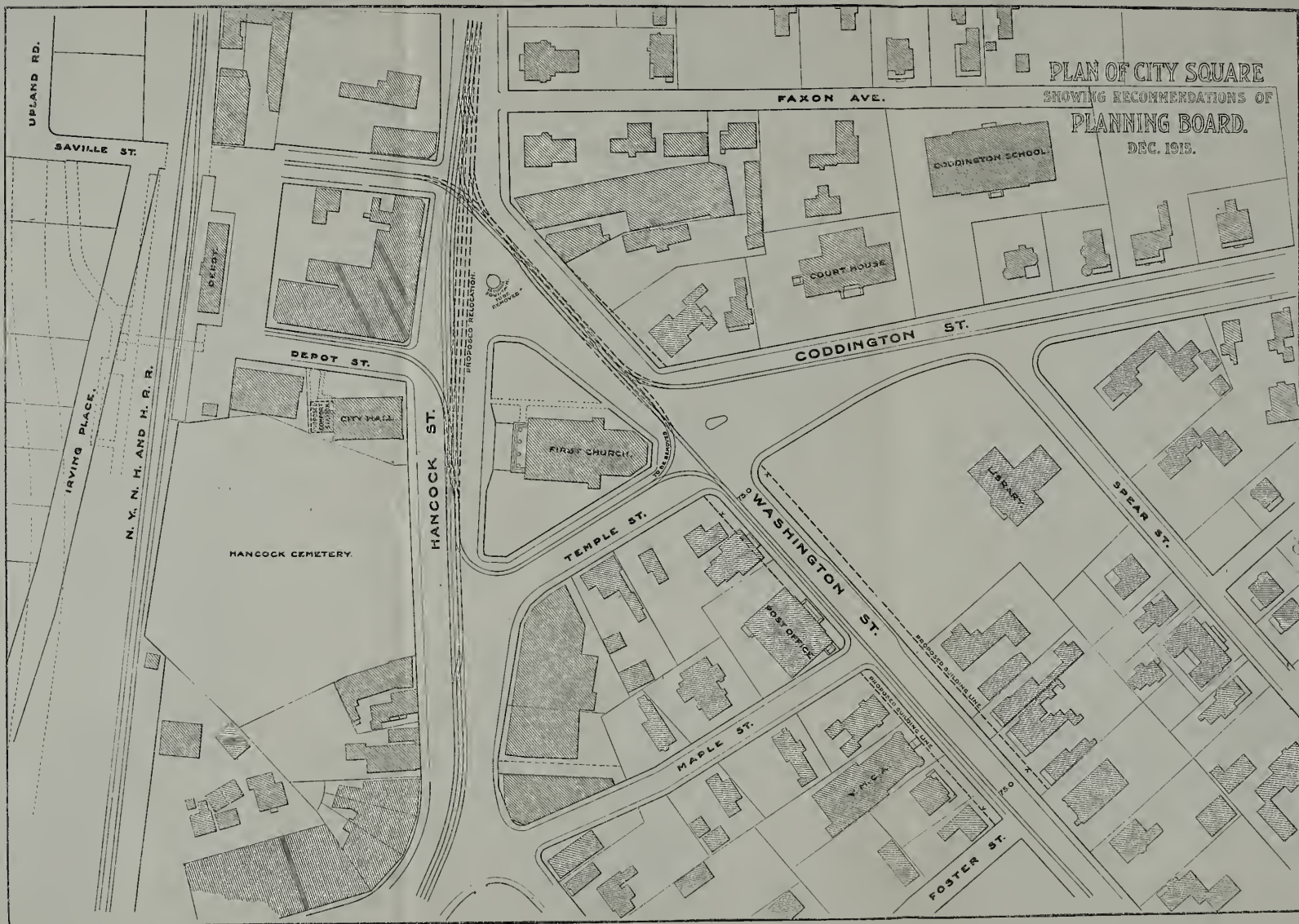
Quincy City Square

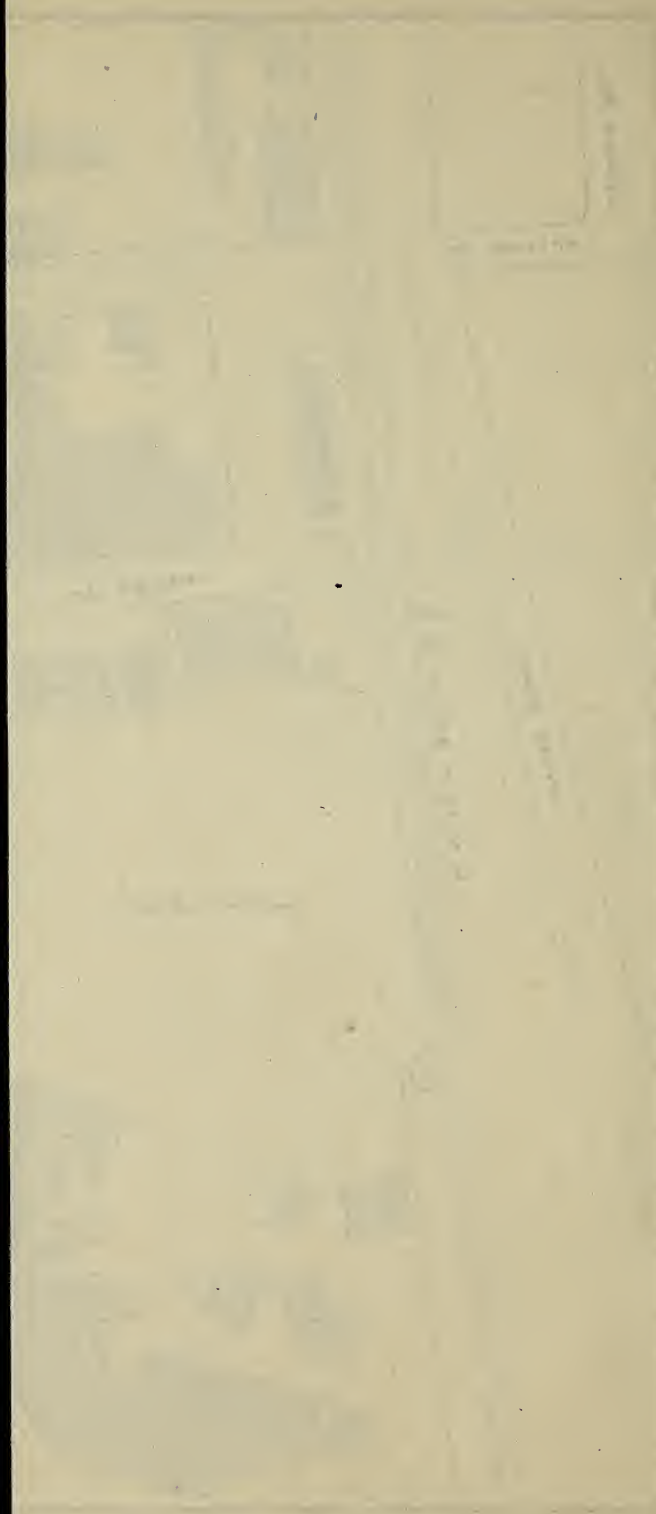
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3. That efforts be made to induce the Bay State Street Railway Company to run their cars which connect with the Elevated through the entire length of Hancock Street to

PLAN OF CITY SQUARE
SHOWING RECOMMENDATIONS OF
PLANNING BOARD.
DEC. 1915.





School Street. This change would undoubtedly necessitate the double tracking of Quincy Avenue from School Street to Scammell Street, or the building of a spur track on Quincy Avenue at the junction of School Street, yet the Board believes that the change would better accommodate the public, and would remove the necessity of running the Elevated cars through Temple Street and Washington Street, as at present.

4. That the Bay State Street Railway Company be requested to construct a double track on Washington Street from Temple Street to Hancock Street, and remove the present track connecting Temple Street with Washington Street, going northerly. -

Waiting Room

At the request of His Honor the Mayor, the Planning Board in conjunction with a special committee of the City Council, have investigated the subject of a waiting room in City Square. From a conference with an official of the Bay State Street Railway Company, it was learned that the company had no immediate plans for establishing a waiting room in City Square, other than that now existing, and that the company considered the present arrangement of providing seats in a neighboring store as satisfactory. The present arrangements do not, however, appeal to the Planning Board as being at all satisfactory, and it therefore recommends that the mayor and the City Council take up this matter with the Street Railway Company in the hope of establishing an adequate waiting room without the necessity of petitioning the Public Service Commission.

Public Sanitary Station

From its investigations, it became apparent to the Planning Board that one of the most urgent public demands and necessities is for better sanitary conveniences in or near City Square, and while it cannot be denied that the facili-

ties furnished by both the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company and the Bay State Street Railway Company are inadequate for the travelling public, it is also true that the City has made no attempt to furnish such conveniences for the general public.

Chapter 596 of the Acts of the year 1911 provides: "That cities and all towns having a population of over 10,000 inhabitants, shall provide in some convenient place or places at or near the business centre of the city or town, one or more sanitary stations, etc.—, provided, however, that if in the opinion of the Board of Health of any city or town such sanitary stations are not necessary in that city or town, such city or town shall not be required to provide the same."

The Planning Board is of the opinion that a public sanitary station located in or near City Square is a public necessity, and with that in view, have investigated the sanitary stations erected in other cities, and have made studies of various locations in City Square where such a station could be erected at a minimum cost, and yet convenient for public use.

In many cities sanitary stations have been constructed entirely under ground in public highways or parks, but such construction would appear to be usually very expensive and the maintenance charges large, as compared with stations constructed entirely above ground.

In Brockton, Brookline and Lawrence such underground stations have been erected at a cost ranging from \$8,000 to \$10,000, with annual maintenance charges of between \$3,500 and \$4,000.

After a careful study of various locations, the Planning Board is of the opinion that an underground station cannot be economically constructed in any portion of City Square, due in part to the elevation of the sewers in Quincy Centre, and in part to the limited area available for street purposes.

The Board, however, submits herewith for your consideration a design for a public sanitary station which could be erected above ground in the rear of the City Hall building on Depot Street. This location seems to present certain advantages: It is not over conspicuous. The cost of construction would not be excessive—the building if constructed with concrete side-walls and granite front in keeping with the character of the present City Hall, fully equipped would probably not exceed \$6,000.

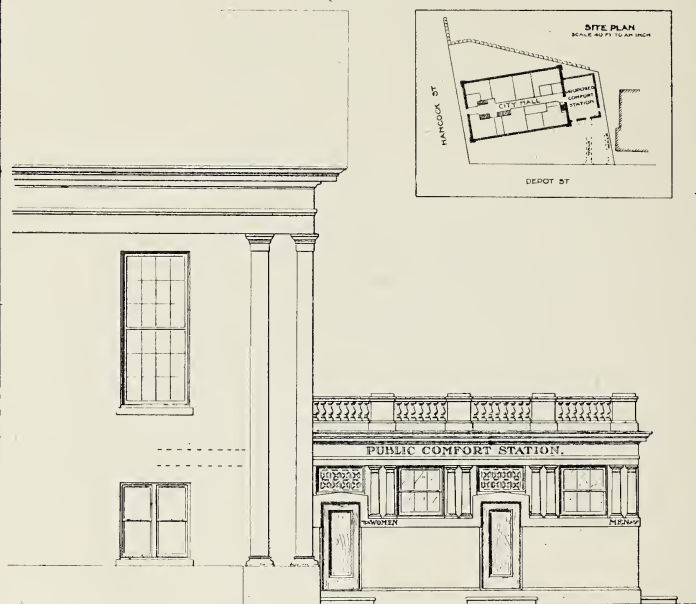
The heating and lighting systems would be connected with those of City Hall and the maintenance charges thereby reduced.

The plan as submitted provides ample accommodations for both men and women, as well as separate accommodations for the employees of City Hall.

Such a sanitary station if erected would undoubtedly require the services of attendants during the hours the station is open to the public. However, the Planning Board would suggest that efforts be made to induce the Bay State Street Railway Company and the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company to share in the expense of maintenance, as such a station would be of decided convenience to the patrons of their roads.

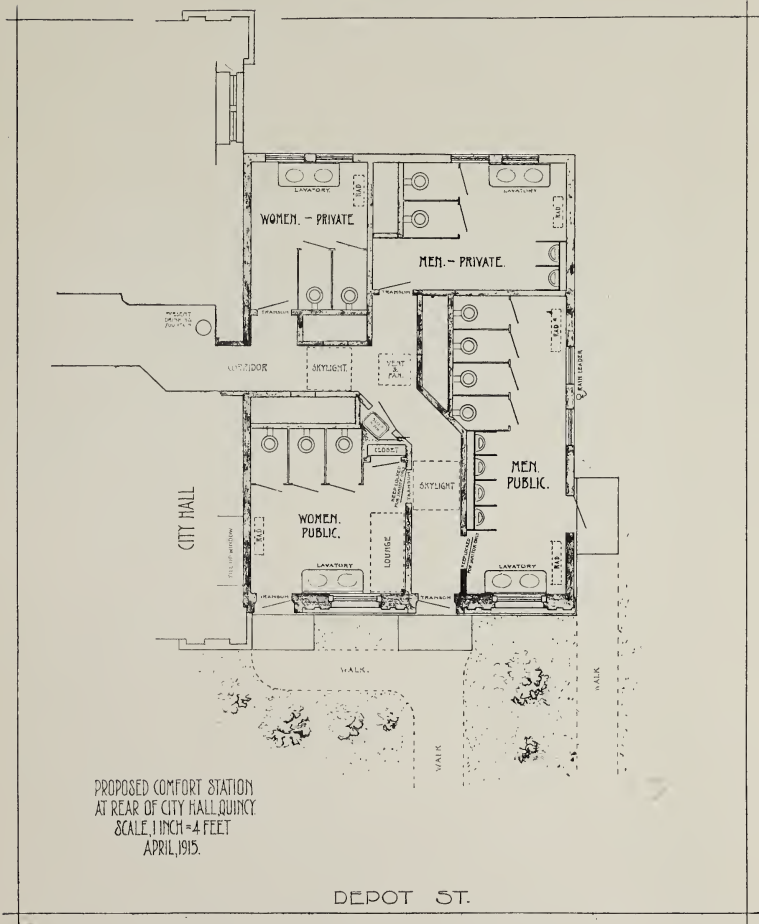
City Hall

The suggestion of constructing a Sanitary Station in the rear of City Hall, immediately opens the question of whether or not this land at some future time will be required for an addition to the present City Hall building? The floor area available for many of the departments at City Hall is very limited, and the efficiency of these departments thereby greatly impaired. It is the opinion of the Planning Board that any extensive alteration of the exterior of City Hall will be unwise, and that the question of securing a site for the erection of a new City Hall building should be seriously considered.



FRONT ELEVATION - DEPOT ST.
SCALE, 1 IN. = 4 FT.

PROPOSED COMFORT STATION
AT REAR OF CITY HALL QUINCY.
SCALE, 1 INCH = 4 FEET.
APRIL, 1915.



Grade Crossing

Acting under the suggestion of His Honor the Mayor, the Board has under consideration the various changes in the highways, bridges and approaches which will be necessary at such time as the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company carries out its plan for constructing a four track railroad system through the city, as well as the changes in the location and grades of streets required in eliminating the grade crossings at Saville Street, Quincy Centre and Water Street, South Quincy, as prescribed by the decree of the Superior Court, confirming the decision of the Special Grade Crossing Commission.

While the Board has given some time to the study of the problems here involved, and to the preparation of plans to assist in their solution, it is not prepared to report at this time on a subject of such importance, and one which they have not had sufficient time to properly consider. The Board expects, however, to present certain recommendations on this subject at a later date.

Conclusion

While many of our citizens no doubt appreciate the beauties of our historic city, there are thousands of people in southeastern Massachusetts who are unfavorably impressed by the unkempt appearance of our city as it is seen from the railroad car windows.

The accompanying pictures show a few of the views familiar to the commuter

CHARLES W. BAILEY, *Chairman*

EUGENE C. HULTMAN

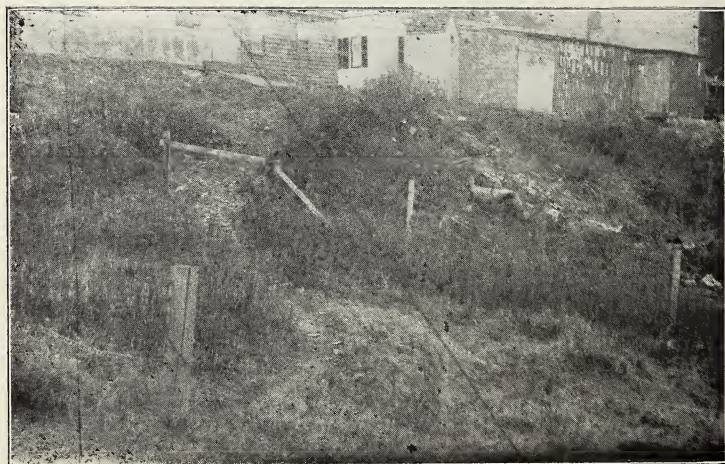
GEORGE W. ABELE

CHARLES A. HADLOCK

WILSON MARSH

EZEKIEL C. SARGENT, *Clerk.*







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